

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

DETENTION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT EXISTING CONDITIONS

The York County Sheriff's Office is the County's chief law enforcement agency. The Sheriff's Office is funded by the State and the number of deputies is based on each locality's population. However, the Board of Supervisors has created and funds additional deputy positions beyond the State's allotment. The Sheriff also serves as court bailiff for York County and Poquoson and, until recently, oversaw the York County Jail, which was closed in 1997. This 11,500 square-foot building, which was located in the historic village of Yorktown next to the York County Circuit Courthouse, was built in 1963 and renovated in 1979 and again in 1995. Because of severe overcrowding in the jail, York County joined with James City County, Williamsburg, and Poquoson to construct the Peninsula Regional Jail to house prisoners from all four localities. The regional jail is located on Merrimac Trail (Route 143) in James City County.

York County participates in a regional Juvenile Detention Commission consisting of the eleven counties and cities from the 9th Judicial District and eight counties from the 15th District. The Commission owns and operates the Merrimac Center – a secure juvenile detention facility located on Merrimac Trail in James City County. The Merrimac Center opened in December 1997 with 32 beds and an additional sixteen beds were added in July 1998.

This 48-bed Center has classrooms, food service, medical, a gymnasium, and offices. It is a self-contained facility with 24 hour per day supervision of juvenile offenders under the age of 18. Residents are ordered into the Center by the Juvenile Courts and have committed property crimes or offenses against the person that range up to and can include murder. Residents are fed, receive medical care, counseling and are schooled throughout their confinement. The length of residence can range from a few days to several months depending upon the nature of the offense and the complexity of the adjudication by the courts.

Juveniles are released by the Courts either back into the community to a lesser level of oversight such as a group home or probation or are transferred to correctional centers operated by the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice. The Commonwealth pays a portion of the operating costs and the member localities pay a per diem charge for each juvenile housed.

Law enforcement depends more on manpower, equipment, and programs than on buildings. The new regional jail has eliminated the overcrowding problem but does nothing to prevent crime from occurring or to make people (other than the jailers, and perhaps the inmates) feel more safe. With 2,935 reported crimes in the County per 100,000 residents in 1996, York County has one of the lowest crime rates on the Peninsula. In comparison, the 1994 Peninsula and Virginia crime rates were 5,402 and 4,074 respectively. Nevertheless, in a fast-growing locality, even a stable crime rate means the number of crimes is increasing.

VIRGINIA CRIME RATES, 1987-1996										
JURISDICTION	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Hampton	5,907	5,659	5,998	6,064	6,186	5,947	5,660	4,911	5,117	5,214
James City County	3,723	3,717	3,893	3,437	3,267	3,098	2,970	2,668	2,709	2,464
Newport News	4,978	5,670	5,698	6,027	6,912	7,248	6,896	6,224	6,276	5,540
Poquoson	1,562	2,311	1,718	1,699	1,354	1,369	1,946	1,575	1,526	1,761
Williamsburg	5,474	4,320	4,056	5,187	5,707	5,097	4,222	5,200	4,266	4,479
YORK COUNTY	2,565	3,213	2,867	2,892	3,550	3,712	3,165	2,958	2,614	2,935
VIRGINIA	3,980	4,210	4,269	4,441	4,681	4,361	4,177	4,074	4,030	3,942
<small>Note: Crime rate calculated as the number of crimes per 100,000 residents Source: Virginia Department of State Police</small>										

Table 8

CHANGES SINCE 1991

The most significant change in the area of detention and law enforcement since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1991 is the closing of the York County Jail and its replacement with the Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail, which houses prisoners from York County as well as James City County, Williamsburg, and Poquoson. The other major change is the opening of the 48-bed regional Juvenile Detention Center (Merrimac Center), which is also located in James City County and houses juvenile offenders from nineteen localities, including York County.

In addition, with the demolition of the jail in Yorktown, the Sheriff's Office headquarters has been temporarily relocated to the York County Finance Building and is scheduled to be moved to a permanent location within the County Operations Center on Goodwin Neck Road.

With regard to crime, the County's crime rate has mirrored the regional and statewide trends since 1991, falling from 3,550 to 2,935 crimes per 100,000 residents.

FIRE AND RESCUE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The York County Department of Fire and Life Safety is responsible for the provision of Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, 911/Emergency Communications, Emergency Management, and Animal Control. The department's administrative offices are to be relocated from the Public Safety Building in Yorktown to the County Operations Complex on Goodwin Neck Road, as are the 911/Emergency Communications Center and the Emergency Operations Center. The fire and rescue field operations are conducted from six fire stations located strategically throughout the County. The department also maintains mutual aid, in-kind service agreements with surrounding localities and federal facilities that provide for the sharing of resources during emergency incidents.

The largest segment/operation within the Department of Fire and Life Safety is the provision of fire, rescue and emergency medical services from the County's fire stations. The locations of the fire stations were chosen in the late 1980s and early 1990s so as to ensure that emergency units leaving the fire station would arrive at the emergency scene in the majority of County areas within five minutes or less.

The County is vulnerable to hazards that may impact a large area and/or multiple residents. Unlike typical fires, medical emergencies and/or vehicle accidents that are often isolated to one or two buildings or individuals, disasters or major emergencies affect many more people and/or larger geographic areas. The County's Office of Emergency Management develops and maintains emergency operations plans to deal with potential large scale emergencies, such as those that might occur at the Surry Nuclear Power Station, in the event of a hurricane or other large scale weather-related event, or in the case of a significant hazardous materials incident.

The provision of 911 for the public and emergency communications for responders is critical to being able to provide quick and efficient law enforcement, fire, rescue and emergency medical services, etc. Since its establishment in 1986, the 911/Emergency Communications Center has been affected considerably by County population growth and service demands.

In order to ensure response to most potential emergencies within the County, the Department of Fire and Life Safety has developed contingencies for special incident responses, either locally or regionally. The department operates a technical rescue team out of its Yorktown Station, which is centrally located for response to both the northern and southern sections of the County. This team has evolved from what was initially a dive team to include water rescue, rope rescue and limited confined space, trench and heavy vehicle rescue. Future plans include expanding these capabilities. This team is also a part of a larger regional technical rescue team. The County is vulnerable to hazardous materials emergencies considering the roadways, railroads, waterways and proximity to the Newport News/Williamsburg Airport that exist in the County. The County's fire and rescue personnel are trained to provide defensive tactics should a spill, leak or fire occur with very limited types of hazardous materials. If the capabilities of the county are exceeded, then the regional hazardous materials response team is requested through the Virginia

Department of Emergency Services. The primary team assigned to York County is in Newport News and would respond, if available, when requested. If unavailable, the back-up team would have to respond from the Southside of Hampton Roads or Richmond areas. All of these teams use personnel normally assigned to fire and EMS vehicles and are not necessarily dedicated for just hazardous materials calls.

The Department of Fire and Life Safety coordinates and/or conducts most of the training required for its staff in the various divisions. This training, which often requires recertification at the State level, is critical to the department's continued readiness for response and service. The department participates on a regional basis for its dispatcher and firefighter recruit training and routinely conducts in-house continuing education and refresher training. Through cooperation with state agencies and other localities in Hampton Roads, the department is pursuing further expansion of its training resources with such things as dispatcher training props and a fire burn building/training facility.

CHANGES SINCE 1991

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1991, the County has undergone several changes in the area of fire and rescue. During this period, the Department of Public Safety was renamed the Department of Fire and Life Safety to describe more accurately the services provided by this department and its subordinate divisions. Also in the previous seven-year period, the activity levels of much of the department's operation have increased quite significantly. These changes include fire and rescue responses increasing 62%, 911 Center activity increasing 55%, and animal control incidents increasing 131%.

Some of the increased call volume in fire and rescue was anticipated when the bond referendum project was initiated in the late 1980s and completed in 1991. Furthermore, the department has overcome some of the additional impacts on the services by taking a number of measures. These include automatic external defibrillation capability placed on fire apparatus; more efficient use of properly designed rescue trucks (a capability previously identified in both the Comprehensive Plan and the County's Transportation Safety Plan); use of mechanical CPR devices called thumpers; initiation of the technical rescue component of the department using existing personnel; combined vehicle functions; and participation in the Tidewater Regional Technical Rescue Team.

Much of the activity in the 911 Center is now more effectively managed because of the implementation of new technology, such as telephone call management information systems (MIS) and interoperability of differing computer systems. Furthermore, the Emergency Communications Division of Fire and Life Safety has improved services to the citizens through the implementation of programs such as Emergency Cellular Call Boxes that are used to report emergencies in isolated areas of the County. This division, in cooperation with the County's Planning Division, has also played an integral role in the County planning process for siting cellular/PCS towers. This has resulted in shared uses of towers when appropriate, along with opportunities for improved communications capabilities for fire, rescue, and law enforcement.

Also since 1991, the County has improved its emergency sheltering capabilities. Through cooperation with the School Division, the Grafton High/Middle School complex was established as an all hazards emergency shelter. It is also equipped with back-up generator power. The Emergency Management Office has also played a significant role at the regional level in ensuring well coordinated planning and responses for those with special needs.

Finally, the department has initiated programs designed to prevent emergencies from occurring and to reduce their severity when they do occur. These include the "Heads Up" program, pre-arrival emergency medical instructions, the "Appeals on Wheels" speed awareness radar trailer, the Fall Prevention Program (designed to prevent ground level falls and personal injuries), child seat education and inspection program (C.A.R.E.) and the teaching of children about fire and life safety practices, educating them on ways to prevent fires and injuries through the S.A.F.E. (Students Apply Fire Education) Club in all of the fourth grades.

GOVERNMENT OFFICES

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Government Offices

York County has two major government office complexes with a total of ten buildings. Four of these buildings are located in Yorktown. Six additional buildings, all built in the 1990s, are part of the County's Central Operations Facility on Goodwin Neck Road, approximately five miles south of Yorktown. Adjacent to this complex is the Solid Waste Management Building, which housed landfill operations prior to the closing of the landfill in October 1993. Finally, the Griffin-Yeates Center is located on Government Road in the upper County. A listing of these office buildings is provided below:

INVENTORY OF YORK COUNTY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND OFFICE BUILDINGS			
NAME OF BUILDING	YEAR BUILT/REMODELED	LOCATION	BUILDING GROSS AREA (SQUARE FEET)
Administration Center	1922 and remodeled several times	Yorktown	17,200
Building and Grounds Maintenance Building	1992	Operations Center	12,800
Court Legislative Building (formerly the Circuit Courthouse)	1955 (Scheduled for renovation in 1998)	Yorktown	16,941
Finance Building (formerly the District Courts Building)	1980 (Scheduled for renovation in 1998-1999)	Yorktown	23,664
Environmental & Development Services Main Building	1995	Operations Center	16,500
Environmental & Development Services Annex	1992	Operations Center	3,427
General Services Office Building	1992	Operations Center	3,887
Griffin-Yeates Center	1953 (expanded and remodeled several times)	Upper County	21,300
Human Services Building	1993	Operations Center	26,000
Parks & Recreation/VPI Building	1998 (under construction)	Operations Center	4,200
Public Safety Building	1958 (remodeled several times since the County acquired this former bank in 1983)	Yorktown	4,900
Solid Waste Management Center	1983 (renovated in 1996)	Operations Center	5,000
Vehicle Maintenance Building	1992	Operations Center	14,000
Note: Inventory does not include the 59,680 square foot York-Poquoson Courthouse that also has office space for the courts and court-related agencies.			

Table 9

Court Facilities

Excluding the state Court of Appeals and Supreme Court, Virginia's court system is composed of district and circuit courts. Circuit Courts have original jurisdiction in civil claims exceeding \$7,000, criminal cases involving felonies, and equity suits such as divorce proceedings, property disputes, and wills, trusts, and estate matters. They also handle appeals from the District Courts and any case for which jurisdiction is not specified in the Code of Virginia.

Virginia's unified District Court system was established in 1973 to replace municipal and county courts throughout the Commonwealth. Each city and county has both a general district and a juvenile and domestic relations court, although 55 of the smaller localities—including York County and Poquoson—have combined clerks' offices. The General District Court decides civil suits involving amounts of money up to \$7,000 and criminal cases in which a person is charged with a misdemeanor (any charge carrying a penalty of no more than one year in jail or a fine up to \$1,000). It also handles all traffic

offense cases and holds preliminary hearings in felony cases. The Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court handles cases involving juveniles, as well as all domestic relations cases, including child/spousal support hearings, custody/visitation hearings, all cases involving the Department of Social Services dealing with abused or neglected children, and foster care cases.

This organization has the potential to change if the Family Court is created. If this occurs, the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court will become the Family Court with exclusive trial court jurisdiction in family matters. As part of this shift, jurisdiction over a variety of types of cases—such as divorces, marriage annulments, petitions for adoptions, and judicial review of certain school board actions and certain hearing officers' decisions—will be transferred from the circuit courts to the family courts. This shift is expected to increase this court's caseload by 35-50%.

In 1997, the York-Poquoson Courthouse was constructed to house all the courts and court related agencies serving York County and the City of Poquoson. This new courthouse has 41,890 square foot of usable space and will accommodate modest growth in caseloads for all the courts and court-related agencies through the year 2015. The new courthouse has five courtrooms and is large enough to handle a Family Court if it is created. This facility also has the potential to meet needs well beyond 2014 for the following reasons:

- Technology has the potential of reducing the impact that increased caseloads and increased courthouse services will have on the size of a courthouse.
- There is a potential to expand the hours of the courthouse operations to meet future growth of services rather than construct additional courtrooms.
- If an additional courtroom is needed at some future date, it can easily be constructed on the second floor of the new courthouse if offices are relocated. This will be the most efficient and economical way to provide an additional courtroom since the existing prisoner holding facilities and building security can be used.
- The adjacent office building built in 1980 referred to as the Finance Building can be used to meet future court-related needs. For example, the court services and juvenile services units occupying 3,345 square feet, the law library occupying 920 square feet, the Commissioner of Accounts occupying 300 square feet, and the commonwealth attorney occupying 3,910 square feet could be relocated to the adjacent building to make room for expansion needs of the courts and court clerks.

CHANGES SINCE 1991

Government Offices

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1991, significant changes have been made to increase the amount of office space available to the County. The following summarizes these changes:

- In 1992, Phase one of the Operations Center was constructed, including the General Services Administration Building, Vehicle Maintenance Building; Building & Grounds Maintenance Building, and Environmental and Development Services Annex.
- In 1993, the 26,000-square foot Human Services Building was constructed. This building accommodates York County Parks & Recreation and the County of York-City of Poquoson Department of Social Services and Family Health Services.
- In 1995, the Environmental & Development Services Administration Building was constructed at the Operations Center. This 10,500 square foot building includes a single story office building with an attached shop.
- In 1997, the York-Poquoson Courthouse was constructed with five courtrooms and office space for all three courts and court-related agencies.

- As of the writing of this plan, a new 4200-square foot building is under construction at the Operations Center to house the Division of Parks and Recreation and the VPI Extension Service. In addition, the former Circuit Courthouse and the former District Courthouse (now referred to as the Finance Building) are scheduled for renovation work. A number of departments and agencies will be relocated during 1998 and 1999 to efficiently use the space available to the County after the new York-Poquoson Courthouse was completed in 1997. In addition, the Law Enforcement Center (formerly York County Jail) and Law Enforcement Center Annex are scheduled to be demolished to make way for more open space and parking in Historic Yorktown.

Future construction planned or proposed for the Operations Center is summarized in the table below:

SUMMARY OF FUTURE BUILDINGS SHOWN IN CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN FOR THE YORK COUNTY OPERATIONS CENTER			
DESCRIPTION	DEPARTMENT/ AGENCY	LOCATION	SIZE (Gross Sq. Ft.)
Storage/Shop Building	Environmental & Development Services	Service Drive	8,000
Office Building	To Be Determined	Service Drive	26,000
Office Building	To Be Determined	Operations Drive	4,000
Warehouse	All Departments/Agencies	Operations Drive	30,000
Vehicle Maintenance Shop Addition	General Services	Operations Drive	4,000
Storage/Shop	General Services	Ft. Eustis Boulevard	6,000
Storage/Shop	General Services	Ft. Eustis Boulevard	13,000
Office	To Be Determined	Goodwin Neck Road	17,000

Table 10

Court Facilities

The caseloads of all three courts have grown tremendously in recent years, putting a heavy strain on the capacity of the courthouses. In addition to the increasing demand on the Circuit and District courtrooms, there were numerous deficiencies in the courthouse facilities themselves that compromised the security, safety, and efficiency of the court operations. Major deficiencies included the absence of security checkpoints and the lack of secure prisoner holding facilities, witness waiting rooms, private attorney/client conference rooms, and adequate parking. In response to these problems, the Board of Supervisors approved construction of a new 59,680 square foot York-Poquoson Courthouse, which houses all three courts and is located in Yorktown. The new courthouse, which opened in September 1997, has been designed to meet the County's court space needs at least through the year 2015.

LIBRARY SERVICE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Library services have long been recognized as being integral to a high quality of life for York County residents. This includes the support of literacy and opportunities for life long learning. In addition, as one of York's premier public facilities, the library must help foster a sense of community and serve as a focal point for citizen interaction.

The County operates a public library located on Route 17 in Grafton. It is an 11,900 square foot facility which opened in September, 1984. Since then, York's population has grown dramatically and demands for library services exceed the capacity of this facility. Consequently, the County is in the early stages of construction of a second library which will be located in the lower County.

Many of York's upper County residents use the Williamsburg-James City County Regional Library

System. The Regional Library operates two facilities - one is located in the City of Williamsburg and the second in upper James City County. Both sites are therefore geographically convenient for certain of York County's residents. Although York is not a member of the regional system, the County makes a voluntary annual contribution to help offset user costs. In Fiscal Year 1996-97, York County's contribution constituted 3.2% the Williamsburg Regional Library System's budget although the County represents about 12% of its registrants and its circulation.

Measures of Service and Quality

The Virginia State Library Board (VSLB) has recommended guidelines for the provision of library services. These are published in Planning for Library Excellence. This document defines a series of goals to help improve the quality of service. The measures of quality include building size, circulation, and the size of the library's collection of books and periodicals. These are primarily presented on a per capita basis in order to allow libraries to tailor them to the size of the community they serve. There are three levels of quality for most of these guidelines, with Level III being the highest or "most excellent."

By the standards of the VSLB, the York County Public Library is too small for the population it serves. Based on the service area population, the County has 0.27 square feet of library space per capita, falling short of the VSLB's guideline of 0.6 square feet. The facility under construction will add 32,000 square feet and should meet future growth needs through the year 2015.

According to the VSLB guidelines, the current library's **book collection** also falls below the minimum standard of excellence for libraries, which is 2.0 volumes per capita. The library currently has about 1.5 volumes per capita. For **periodicals**, however, the current library exceeds the Level III (highest) standard of excellence, with 5.4 titles per thousand residents. In the area of circulation, the library exceeds Level II, with 7.7 items circulated per capita. Annual circulation per capita is considered one measure of the relevance of the collection to user needs.

	York County Public Library	Williamsburg Regional Library System
Square Feet	12,000	62,000
Square Feet Per Capita	.27	.98
Service Area Population	44,500 *	63,300 **
Volumes	68,000	216,000
Volumes Per Capita	1.5	3.4
Periodicals	280	377
Periodical Per 1,000 Residents	6.3	6.0
Circulation	326,000	780,000
Circulation Per Capita	7.3	12.3
Registrations	27,000	45,000
Audio/Visual Materials	3,920	15,900
* South of the Naval Weapons Station ** Williamsburg, James City County and Upper York		
Source: Head Librarians		

Table 11

VIRGINIA STATE LIBRARY BOARD GUIDELINES			
Measure Of Quality	Levels Of Excellence		
	I	II	III
Square Feet per Capita	0.6	0.6	0.6
Volumes per Capita	2.0	3.0	4.0
Periodicals per 1000 Residents	4.1	6.6	8.6
Source: Virginia State Library and Archives, <u>Planning for Library Excellence</u> (1988).			

Table 12

CHANGES SINCE 1991

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1991, there have been several changes to library service provided to York County citizens. The York County Public Library has expanded its collection despite serious space deficiencies. The book collection has grown by 15,000 volumes, which is an increase of 28.3%. Periodicals increased by 64.7% (110 titles), while audio/visual materials have increased by 78.2% (1,720 titles). Circulation at the library has increased 53.8%. Perhaps most significantly, however, the County acquired a site on Route 134 for a new library, and construction has been completed.

Also since 1991, the Williamsburg-James City County Regional Library system has constructed a branch library in the Norge area of James City County, providing more convenient service to York County residents in the Lightfoot area. In addition, the Williamsburg Regional Library on Scotland Street has been expanded.

PARKS AND RECREATION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Recreational Programs

York County offers a variety of programs for both active and passive recreation. Available to young people are a wide range of programs including soccer, tennis, basketball, roller skating, summer playgrounds, sports camps and a variety of instructional classes (art, music, dance, etc.). Adult programs include softball, basketball, tennis, volleyball, aerobics, and instructional classes.

For senior adults, York County operates the Senior Center of York, which is located in the Washington Square Shopping Center and offers a wide variety of activities, classes, special events, and trips. In addition, programs and activities sponsored by the Historic Triangle Senior Center, located in the James City County-Williamsburg Community Center, are available to seniors living in the upper County.

Residents of all ages can participate in the County's open gym program and the two "Skate, Rattle, and Roll" roller skating programs. The open gym program is conducted in various elementary and middle school gymnasiums throughout the year and is geared toward casual/pick-up ball games. Skating in the upper County is held in rented space at the Historic Triangle Community Services Center; in the lower County, the program is operated in the Dare Elementary School gymnasium.

Several recreational programs are also available to County residents through private organizations or other public agencies. Private organizations sponsoring programs in both the upper and lower County include four youth baseball/softball associations, four youth football/cheerleading associations, four soccer clubs, three swim team/aquatic clubs, and two youth wrestling associations. In addition, the Williamsburg and James City County Parks and Recreation Departments make available programs and facilities to upper County residents. Many of these organizations use County facilities, and they meet a significant portion of the demand in the County for recreational activities.

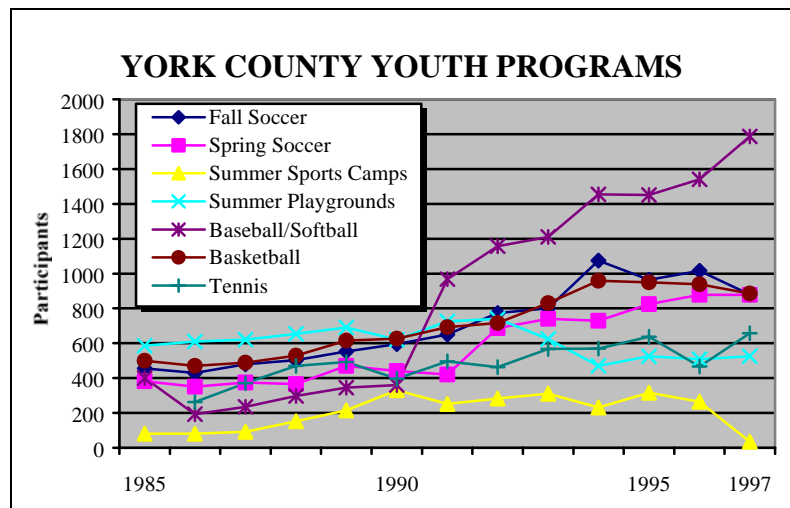


Figure 19

Participation in York County recreational programs has increased 542% since 1990. Seventy-two percent of this growth, however, is due to the addition of the Senior Center of York and associated activities (14,078 participants in 1997), instructional classes (1,025 participants in 1997), and the two roller-skating programs (17,250 participants in 1997). Nevertheless, growth in existing programs has also been significant. Excluding new programs that were introduced and others that were discontinued or transferred between 1990 and 1997, there was a 78% increase in overall program participation and a 67% increase in youth program participation during that period. Growth in adult programs was more moderate, with a 14% increase between 1990 and 1997.

Among the youth programs, baseball/softball and soccer have been two of the most popular and fastest-growing activities, growing by 117% and 70% between 1990 and 1997. Youth tennis has also grown in popularity – with a 65% increase from 1990 to 1997 – and most of the remaining youth programs experienced a moderate increase in participation. All of the demand for youth baseball and softball in the upper and lower County is met by programs sponsored by the 4 youth baseball/softball associations or the Williamsburg Parks and Recreation Department. In 1997, there were a total of 1,445 participants from York County in spring and summer baseball/softball programs in the lower and upper County. Fall baseball/softball programs in 1997 had over 550 County youth participants.

Recreational programs for adults are not as extensive as the youth programs. The softball programs – both men's and co-ed – have experienced significant growth, more than doubling from 465 in 1990 to 1,215 in 1997. Participation in the basketball and tennis programs, in contrast, has been on the wane, declining in the 1990-97 period by 80% and 58% respectively.

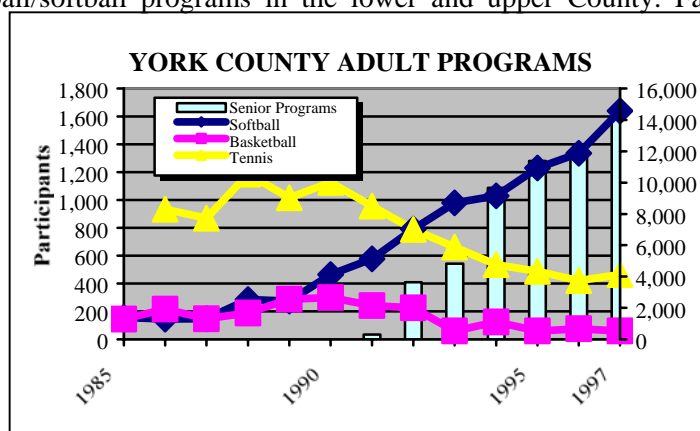


Figure 20

School/Park Facilities

York County's development of recreational facilities at school sites for community use, known as the "school/park concept," has proven to be an effective means of providing athletic fields, gymnasiums, basketball and tennis courts, and playground areas that serve both school and community needs. In fact, if the County were to provide separate facilities comparable to what is found at the 18 school sites, millions of additional dollars would have to be spent to duplicate the infrastructure that already exists at school sites (utilities, parking, etc.). Citizens have been well served by the school/park concept in York County and will continue to be so for years to come. In this regard, York County is a model for other communities wishing to provide recreational facilities in a cost-effective manner.

Development of school/park facilities began in 1985, after a joint effort by County and School staffs to develop master plans for each elementary, middle, and high school site in the County was completed. In addition to utilizing the sites to the fullest extent possible for community and school purposes, the master planning effort also tried to achieve equity among the school, by establishing a basic set of *core* facilities that should exist at each site. For example, each elementary school master plan depicts these core facilities: a gymnasium, two playground areas, a youth baseball/softball field, a soccer field, and two outdoor basketball courts. However, in addition to these core facilities, some elementary school sites may have, for example, larger soccer fields that are lighted, two baseball fields, tennis courts, and so forth if the site is able to accommodate such development and if there is a need in that geographic area for such a facility. These plans have also been revised periodically as the need to expand school buildings and/or provide additional facilities occurred. The vast majority of the County's school sites have been fully developed, and current efforts are directed towards upgrading existing facilities by installing irrigation and/or lighting systems, improving drainage on infields, or renovating turf grass.

Because of the commitment to the school/park concept, most of the County's recreational activities take place on school grounds. In order to maximize the community's use of these facilities, the Board of Supervisors and the School Board first entered into an agreement in 1991, and then updated it in 1997, whereby the Parks and Recreation Division assumed responsibility for scheduling after-school use of gymnasiums and outdoor facilities at all elementary schools and three of the four middle schools. (Elementary and middle schools are the primary school/park sites since they do not have as many after-school activities as the high schools.) An additional benefit of this centralized scheduling approach is that valuable usage data is compiled and analyzed in order to assess the existing demand and long-term needs for recreational facilities.

Athletic field usage and program participation data collected since 1991 has provided some useful information. Although there has been a 75% increase in the number of hours athletic fields are reserved since 1991, the increase since 1995 has only been 5%. This difference is attributed to the fact that since the mid-1990s, athletic fields in the County have been operated almost at maximum capacity during the prime seasons for sports activities (fall and spring). This data, coupled with program participation increases of over 500% since 1991 and 45% since 1995, gives some indication of the demand for athletic field usage.

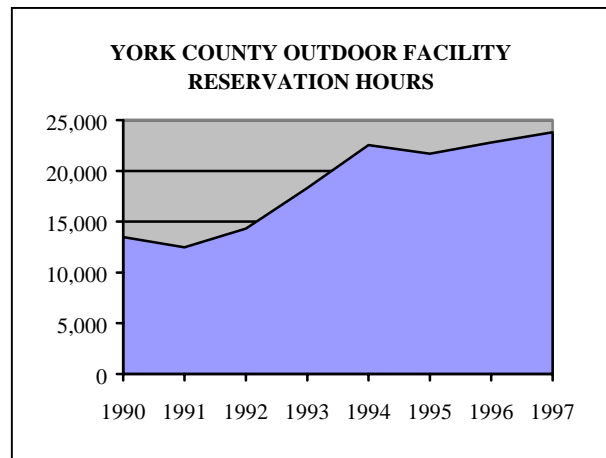


Figure 21

Moreover, although 74% of the County's soccer participants live in the Grafton/Tabb area, only 33% of the soccer fields in the lower County are located in Grafton/Tabb. In contrast, residents in the York/Seaford/Dare areas comprise 26% of the soccer participation but have 66% of the soccer fields in the lower County located in their geographic area.

A final aspect relating to facility use issues to consider is the effect that inadequate high school facilities has had on other school and park facilities that are supposed to be available for community use. For example, the Tabb and Grafton High School soccer and field hockey teams have had to use Mount Vernon Elementary School and Wolf Trap Park for their practices and games because of problems with athletic fields at these high schools. The intensity of high school interscholastic sports has had a detrimental effect on these fields to the point that they need to be renovated. However, with the heavy demand for field usage, it would be extremely difficult to take these fields out of service without having an adverse effect on community-based programs.

Park and Recreational Facilities

Complementing the school/park facilities are a variety of other park and recreational facilities. County facilities include Back Creek Park, Charles E. Brown Park, Chisman Creek Park, Kiln Creek Park, New Quarter Park, Wolf Trap Park, the Yorktown Waterfront, and the Old Wormley Creek and Rodgers A. Smith public boat landings. Also located in the County are several non-County parks, including the Colonial National Historical Park, which is owned and operated by the National Park Service, Waller Mill Park (City of Williamsburg), and Harwoods Mill Park (City of Newport News). In addition, the County rents space at the Washington Square Shopping Center in Grafton, which serves as the program site for the Senior Center of York, and space in the Historic Triangle Community Services Center on Waller Mill Road for the "Skate, Rattle and Roll" roller skating program. Finally, many subdivision and apartment complexes in the County have private recreational facilities – such as swimming pools, playing fields, tennis courts, weight rooms – available for their residents' use.

Back Creek Park is located on Goodwin Neck Road in the Seaford area. Amoco Oil Company donated this 27 acres of waterfront property on Back Creek to the County in 1978, and the park was opened for use in 1981. Facilities include six lighted tennis courts (the only lighted tennis courts in the County), a boat launching facility, a fishing/crabbing pier, a small picnic area and a rest room building with a small

office for seasonal staff who oversee park activities. Back Creek Park serves as the hub for the County's tennis programs, which include leagues, lessons, camps and tournaments for youths and adults. The boat launching facility is considered to be one of the finest on the Peninsula and as a result is heavily used.

A 10-acre site on Route 238 in Lackey, Charles E. Brown Park was opened in 1978 as the County's first park. Park facilities available for public use include: a 3,000 square foot Community Services Center Building, two tennis courts, two lighted basketball courts, a baseball field, a playground area, a picnic shelter (donated by the York County Business Association), and a rest room building. Constructed with a combination of federal and local funds, the Community Services Center Building has two small meeting rooms, and one large meeting room with a kitchenette that is available for use free of charge. The only lighted outdoor basketball court in the County is located at this facility.

Two reclaimed fly ash sites are leased from Virginia Power by the County for recreational use. Chisman Creek Park is a 13-acre parcel on Wolf Trap Road in Grafton that opened in the Spring of 1991. This park has two lighted softball fields and a rest room building and is used as the primary site for the adult softball league program. However, because of the increasing demand for lighted athletic fields, both of the softball fields are being used for soccer play in the fall. The second reclaimed fly ash site, Wolf Trap Park, is also located on Wolf Trap Road. Opened in 1992, this 28-acre site features four soccer fields, a rest room building, and two small ponds.

Kiln Creek Park is the most recent addition to the County's inventory of park facilities. This 20-acre site on Kiln Creek Parkway in Tabb was dedicated to the County by the developer of the Villages of Kiln Creek for a future school/park site. The County has leased this property from the School Board for use as a park until there is a need to construct a school on the site. The site was master-planned as a school/park facility, so the addition of a school building on the property will have minimal disruption to the existing recreational facilities. An adjacent one-acre parcel is also set aside for construction of a future fire station should the need arise. A lighted soccer field, lighted baseball field, youth baseball/softball field, two basketball courts, a playground area and rest room facility will be developed in phases on this site, with all construction scheduled to be completed by the year 2000. The athletic fields were developed during the first construction phase in 1997 and opened for use in the spring of 1998.

Located in the upper County, adjacent to the Queens Lake subdivision and the Colonial Parkway, is New Quarter Park. This 545-acre tract, which was acquired from the federal government by the County free of charge through a surplus land program in 1976, is the largest single parcel of park acreage in the County. Most of the land is heavily wooded, with only eight acres developed for use as a group activity area and approximately 95 acres of large open grassy areas. Park facilities include a picnic pavilion that seats up to 120 people and is lighted for evening use with an adjacent barbecue pavilion, a campfire circle with seating for 100 people, a softball field, a hard-surfaced volleyball court, horseshoe courts, a floating pier on Queen Creek and hiking trails.

When it opened for use in 1986, New Quarter Park was available only for group activities on a reservation basis, hosting activities such as family reunions, church/company picnics, weddings, civil war reenactments, scout jamborees, and primitive camping. Group usage averaged 9,440 people per year, with 65% to 75% of the groups reserving the park being from York and James City Counties and the City of Williamsburg. Most group sizes ranged between 75 and 125 people but there have been single groups as large as 3,000 people. Casual use of the park by walkers, joggers and bicyclists also occurs daily throughout the year, weather permitting. Beginning in 2000, New Quarter Park has been opened to the general public for seasonal use (May through November) on a trial basis.

The Yorktown Waterfront occupies a total of two acres along the York River in historic Yorktown and provides opportunities for swimming, sunbathing, fishing, and boating. This property is owned by the Yorktown Board of Trustees but through an agreement with the Board of Supervisors is managed and maintained by the County. Developed in 1977 with a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Yorktown Waterfront is the only public beach facility in York County. In addition to the beach area, the Yorktown Wharf and the Yorktown Pier facilities are also located along the Waterfront. Recently closed to the public because of safety concerns, the Yorktown Wharf had accommodated public fishing and various types of docking activities. The Yorktown Pier, which is located at the intersection of Comte de Grasse and Water Streets, is open to the public for fishing and is currently leased by a commercial

cruise line company for short-term docking privileges. Future improvements, renovations and/or use of these Waterfront facilities are subject to the concepts presented in the Yorktown Master Plan.

The Senior Center of York is located in 3,000 square feet of rented storefront space in the Washington Square Shopping Center in Grafton. The Center was located in a 1,000-square foot unit in the Patriot Square Shopping Center in 1991 but was moved to the larger facility in 1993 because the number of citizens participating in senior adult programs had outgrown the capacity of the facility. In addition to its regular activities, the Center serves as a nutrition site for the Peninsula Agency on Aging. This facility is open during the day, Monday through Friday.

The County also leases approximately 7,000 square feet in the Historic Triangle Community Services Center on Waller Mill Road for the operation of a roller skating program called “Skate, Rattle and Roll”. This program began in October of 1994 and is generally operated year-round on Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons and evenings.

In recent years, many citizens have advocated the development of a community center. Land has been acquired on Route 134 adjacent to the Tabb library facility for future construction of a community center that would serve residents in the lower County. Plans to provide similar opportunities for upper County residents would most likely involve some type of cooperative arrangement with existing community/recreation centers operated by James City County or the City of Williamsburg.

Finally, York County has seven public boat ramps, all of them located in the lower County. Proximity to the York River and the Chesapeake Bay makes boating an extremely popular activity in York County. Proximity, however, does not guarantee access. Much of the County’s shoreline is in federal ownership (Camp Peary, Naval Weapons Station, and the Coast Guard Training Center). This contributes to the shortage of boat landings in the County, as evidenced by current overcrowding at the Rodgers A. Smith and Back Creek Park facilities. The County intends to improve the existing public access sites and acquire new land for recreational use. The Rodgers A. Smith boat ramp is slated for improvement with the construction of an improved floating dock in 2004. The County is also adding public rest room facilities at this location in conjunction with the extension of sanitary sewer. The sanitary sewer pump station is being designed to allow for future pump-out facilities at the boat ramp. In addition, through a grant from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, a crabbing and fishing pier was built at Back Creek Park, and the County replaced the floating wooden dock with a concrete floating dock.

According to the recreational needs assessment conducted for York County by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the demand for water acreage from water-based recreational activities is expected to increase by 13% between the year 2000 and 2010. The 1990 Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan offers suggestions for accommodating this increased demand, including the following:

- Additional boating access for areas west of the Coleman Bridge and east of York River State Park,
- Additional boating sites on the Poquoson River in order to relieve the heavy boat traffic near the mouth of the York River,
- Increased accessibility to the large tidal marshes along the creeks of the County for nature study and environmental education, and
- Analysis of the lands along the Colonial Parkway to identify potential sites where water access could be improved by providing additional parking areas.

In addition to these areas, land along Queen Creek was identified as a potential access area. Chisman Creek would also be a good site for a public boat launching facility because there is deeper water suitable for launching larger boats. The parking lot at Back Creek Park could also be considered for expansion. For canoeists and kayakers, the Wormley Creek Boat Landing has potential for improved access. In addition, increased accessibility to the large tidal marshes along the creeks of the County would allow for nature study and environmental education. Existing and potential water access sites in the County, both public and private, are depicted on the Public and Private Access to Water map, with detailed information on each provided in the three tables below.

Existing Public Shoreline And Water Access Points - York County

Map No.	Public Access Area	Day Use	Seasonal Use	Fee or Permit	Shoulder Parking	Limited Parking Lot	Large Parking Lot	Boat Launch Ramp	Car Top Boat Only	Dock	Bank and Pier Fishing	Swimming Beach	Hiking Trails	Camping	Nature Study / Education	Picnicking	Restrooms	Handicapped Access	Shoreline Erosion	Wetlands	Natural Heritage Areas	Cultural Resources	Pumpout
1	Back Creek Park	x					x	x		x	x				x	x	x			x			
2	Cheatham Wilderness										x		x		x	x					x		
3	Colonial National Historic Park	x				x		x			x			x	x	x	x	x		x		x	
4	New Quarter Park	x	x	x			x		x		x		x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	
5	Old Wormley Creek Landing	x					x	x		x	x							x					
6	Rodgers A. Smith Landing	x				x		x		x	x				x		x			x			
7	Yorktown Waterfront	x					x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x				x	

Public Access Area	Water Body	Remarks
Back Creek Park	Back Creek	Tennis, crabbing, fishing, picnicking
Cheatham Wilderness	Queen Creek	Limited access, open by permit only, eagle/osprey nesting
Colonial National Historic Park	York River	Historic site, bike path, interpretive center, camping by permit
New Quarter Park	Queen Creek	Limited access – open to public seasonally
Old Wormley Creek Landing	Wormley Creek	Launch at high tide only, dock
Rodgers A. Smith Landing	Poquoson River	VDGIF site, 3 ramps, pier for fishing and crabbing
Yorktown Waterfront	York River	Historic site, food, swimming, fishing, picnicking
Sources:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesapeake Bay and Its Tidal Tributaries & Susquehanna River Public Access Guide, 1989; revised map 1995 Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan. Chesapeake Bay Program Agreement Commitment Report, December 1990 		

Existing Commercial/Private Marinas, Boat Ramps & Recreation Areas - York County

Map No.	Public Access Area	Water Body	Boat Launch Ramp	Number of Wet Slips	Dockside Pumpout Station	Restrooms	Remarks
1	Aqua Marine	Chisman Creek	x	25		x	Repairs, convenience store, shower.
2	Belvin Marine	The Thorofare	x	8		x	Boat lift, electric, engine sales, repairs, beverages.
3	Camp Skimino	Skimino Creek					Girl Scout reservation.
4	Dare Marina	Chisman Creek		50	x	x	300' floating docks, 128 dry storage, marine store, gas, ice.
5	Marlbank Cove	Wormley Creek		12			Private
6	Mills Marina	Back Creek		58	x	x	Marine store, gas, electric, bait.
7	Queens Lake Boat Dock	Queen Creek	x	88	x		Private
8	Seaford Yacht Club	Back Creek		30			Private

Existing Commercial/Private Marinas, Boat Ramps & Recreation Areas - York County

Map No.	Public Access Area	Water Body	Boat Launch Ramp	Number of Wet Slips	Dockside Pumpout Station	Restrooms	Remarks
9	Smith's Marine Railway	Chisman Creek	x	6			Repairs only.
10	Thomas Marina	Chisman Creek		35		x	Dock, electric
11	Williamsburg KOA	Skimino Creek					Campground off Lightfoot Road (Rt 646).
12	Wormley Creek Marina	Wormley Creek		72	x	x	40 dry storage, repairs, showers, gas, diesel, electric, beverages

Sources: Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan. Chesapeake Bay Program Agreement Commitment Report, December 1990, and Boating Almanac. Volume 4, 1993.

Potential Public Shoreline and Water Access Points - York County

Map No.	Public Access Area	Day Use	Seasonal Use	Fee or Permit	Shoulder Parking	Limited Parking Lot	Large Parking Lot	Boat Launch Ramp	Car Top Boat Only	Dock	Bank and Pier Fishing	Swimming Beach	Hiking Trails	Camping	Nature Study / Education	Picnicking	Restrooms	Handicapped Access	Shoreline Erosion	Wetlands	Natural Heritage Areas	Cultural Resources	Pumpout
1	Back Creek Site							x			x					x				x			
2	Back Creek Park																			x			x
3	Cheatham Wilderness							x				x		x									
4	Poquoson River Site							x			x				x	x				x			
5	York River Potential Site								x		x	x			x	x				x		x	
6	Yorktown Waterfront							x			x												

Public Access Area	Water Body	Remarks
Back Creek Site	Back Creek	Potential for pier or dock
Back Creek Park	Back Creek	
Cheatham Wilderness	Queen Creek	Limited Access, Eagle / Osprey Nesting
Poquoson River Site	Poquoson River	
York River Potential Site	York River	Potential for pier or dock
Yorktown Waterfront	York River	

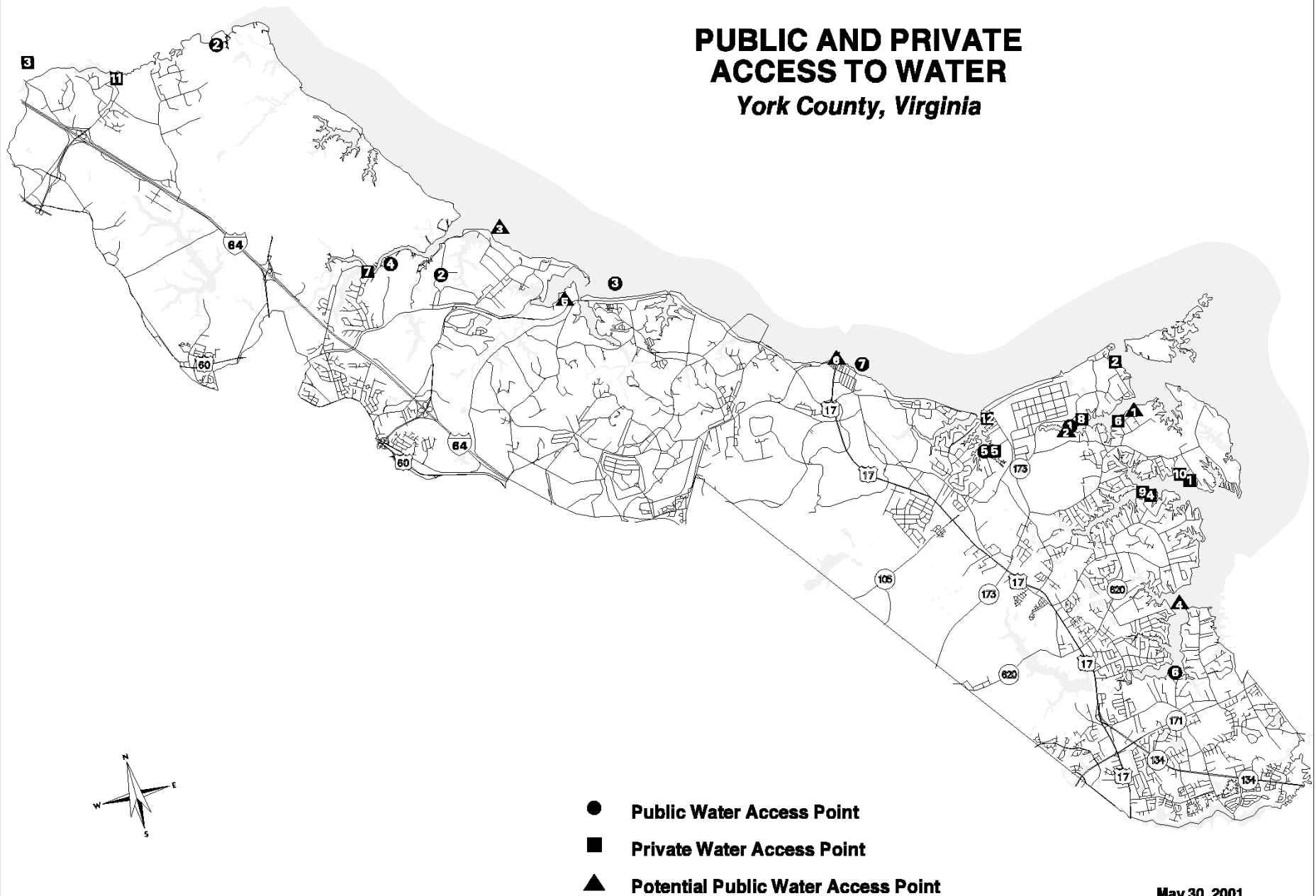
Source: Chesapeake Bay Public Access Plan. Chesapeake Bay Program Agreement Commitment Report, December 1990.

CHANGES SINCE 1991

Recreational Programs

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ACCESS TO WATER

York County, Virginia



May 30, 2001
Prepared by York County
Computer Support Services

As the County's population has grown and changed demographically, similar changes have also taken place with recreational programs in the County. In general, changes in recreational program offerings that have occurred since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1991 have reached a broader segment of the population – from the preschooler to the senior adult – and have supplemented rather than duplicated private sector and community-based programming efforts to the point where there is an adequate assortment of recreational opportunities for citizens of all ages.

Major changes in recreational programming include the following:

- opening and operating of the Senior Center of York in the lower County.
- collaborating regional programming efforts for seniors in the upper County with the Historic Triangle Senior Center.
- entering into a contract with the York County Little League to take over all of the County-sponsored youth baseball and softball league programs.
- transferring the operation of the Williamsburg area soccer program to the James City County Parks and Recreation Division.
- starting two new public roller skating programs and an instructional class program.

Less comprehensive programming changes that have been responsive to the needs expressed by citizens have been:

- initiation of an open gym program.
- extension of the hours of operation for the Summer Fun Playground and Special Recreation Camp programs.
- expansion of the variety of summer sports camps.
- offering field trips in the summer for teens.
- sponsorship of an adult volleyball league and a fall adult softball league.

School/Park Facilities

Many changes have occurred on school sites as a result of school construction, renovation, and expansion projects. In fact, because of the number of changes that needed to be made in order to accommodate the growing student population, all of the school/park master plans were updated in 1993 by a team of School Division and County staff. All of the changes relating to school/park facilities have had either a direct or indirect effect on the services provided by the Parks and Recreation Division.

School/park facility changes since 1991 are summarized as follows:

- Gymnasiums/physical education spaces were added to Tabb, Dare, Yorktown and Bethel Manor Elementary Schools, leaving Seaford and Waller Mill Elementary Schools as the only schools in the County needing gymnasium facilities.
- Lights were added to the regulation-size soccer fields at Coventry and Magruder Elementary Schools; the football/soccer field at Bruton High School was also renovated and lighted.
- A youth baseball/softball field was constructed at Tabb and Dare Elementary Schools, and on property leased from Bethel Baptist Church adjacent to Tabb High School.
- A new field hockey/soccer field and six new tennis courts were constructed at York High School and were located on the site according to the school/park master plan.
- Construction of the Grafton High/Middle School complex was completed and included gymnasium space and athletic fields.
- A soccer field was constructed at Tabb and Dare Elementary Schools.
- The athletic fields and outdoor basketball courts at Grafton Bethel Elementary School were renovated and relocated according to the school/park master plan.

In addition to the facilities that have been developed, the Board of Supervisors and School Board approved a joint agreement in 1991 which assigned the responsibility for scheduling after school use of outdoor athletic facilities at elementary and middle schools to the Division of Parks and Recreation. Because of the successful implementation of the 1991 agreement, the responsibility for scheduling

gymnasium facilities was also given to Parks and Recreation, which necessitated updating the existing agreement. The revised agreement was approved in 1997.

OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY (Includes existing facilities and facilities currently under construction)								
Type of Facility	Upper County		York/Dare Area		Grafton/Tabb Area		Total County	
	1991	1998	1991	1998	1991	1998	1991	1998
Instructional Soccer	1	1	1	4	1	1	3	6
Soccer/Football	4	4	3	8	5	7	18	19
Youth Baseball/Softball	4	5	7	8	2	6	13	19
Combination Field*	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Regulation Softball	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	1
Regulation Baseball	2	2	4	5	2	2	8	9
Track	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	5
Tennis Courts	6	6	16	22	4	6	26	34
Outdoor Basketball Courts	6	6	16	18	9	11	31	35
Boat Ramps	0	0	5	5	2	2	7	7
Picnic Areas	1	1	1	2	0	0	2	3
The York/Dare area includes facilities north of Dare Road up to Charles Brown Park in Lackey								
*Lighted soccer/football field at Tabb Middle School								

Table 13

Park and Recreational Facilities

Changes relating to park and recreational facilities since 1991 are highlighted as follows:

- Chisman Creek Park opened in 1992. Chisman Creek Park's softball fields were irrigated in 1995.
- Charles E. Brown Park was renovated and some new facilities were constructed. A regulation-size baseball field replaced the softball field; a 3,000-square foot Community Services Center was constructed; a picnic shelter was donated and built by the York County Business Association; and new playground equipment was installed and the parking lot was expanded.
- The seventeen-year-old floating wooden docks at Back Creek Park's boat launching facility were replaced with floating concrete docks. A grant was also received from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to construct a fishing/crabbing pier at the boat launching facility.
- Use of lifeguards to supervise the beach at the Yorktown Waterfront was discontinued and replaced with a beach patrol program that uses law enforcement personnel from the Sheriff's Office.
- The Senior Center of York moved from a 1,000-square foot storefront facility at Patriot Square Shopping Center to a 3,000-square foot rented storefront space at Washington Square Shopping Center.
- In order to provide a new roller skating program in the upper County, 7,000 square feet of space was leased on a multi-year basis from the Historic Triangle Community Services Center for use as the program site.
- The Kiln Creek school/park site was leased by the County from the School Board for use as a park until a school building is constructed on the site. A regulation-size soccer field, regulation-size baseball field, a youth baseball/softball field and a 75-car parking lot were built on this site in 1997 as the first phase of construction.

SCHOOLS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

System Overview

The York County School Division consists of eighteen schools: ten elementary schools, four middle schools, and four high schools. In addition, the School Board owns a site for future school development within the Villages of Kiln Creek planned development.

York County currently operates one magnet program, the School of the Arts, which is located at Bruton High School and offers classes in both literary and theater arts. The County also offers the EXTEND Program at York High School, which serves academically gifted students, providing differentiated instruction that individualizes the learning experience beyond that in the regular classroom. In addition, a variety of advanced placement courses are offered in all the high schools. Adult learning opportunities in both basic and continuing education, including GED preparatory classes, are also provided.

Population and School Membership History

The term *school membership* is used to describe the number of students registered to attend the public school system at a given point in time. It consists of the number of entries and re-entries, less the number of total withdrawals. The cumulative number of students enrolled in the system during the school year exceeds the membership figure.

School membership was fairly constant prior to World War II (see **Figure 22**), but the postwar baby boom brought a dramatic increase in the number of school-age children, thus putting tremendous pressure on school systems all over the country in the 1950s and '60s. York County was no exception. Between 1950 and 1960, when the total population of the County climbed by 47%, school membership jumped by **86%**. As a result, the ratio of school students to the total population rose from 15% in 1950 to 19% in 1960. This growth in school membership, dramatic though it was, pales in comparison to the 1960s, which brought a 60% increase in population and a **135%**

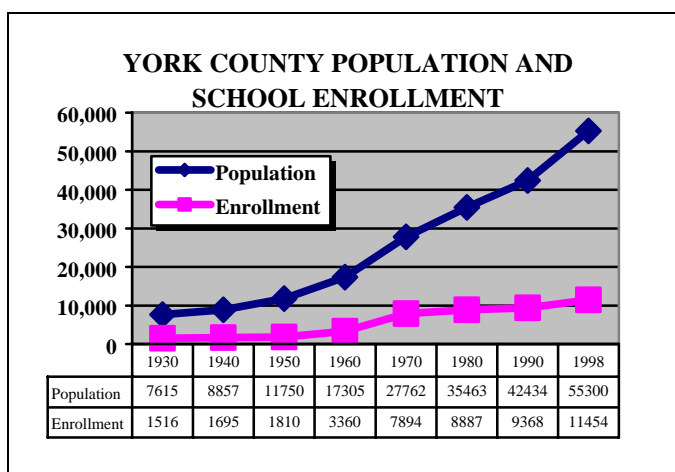


Figure 22

increase in school membership; by 1970, the student/population ratio had climbed to nearly 30%. The response to this enormous growth in the student population was a major expansion in school facilities: ten of the County's eighteen existing schools were built between 1954 and 1969.

The 1970s and '80s brought relative stability to school membership, with growth rates of 12% and 6% respectively. In contrast, the County's population growth rate was 28% during the '70s and 20% during the '80s. As a result, the student/population ratio fell to 25% in 1980 and to 22% in 1990. In fact, student membership actually *declined* between 1980 and 1986 despite continued housing construction. It then increased fairly steadily through the end of the decade as the so-called "baby boom echo" (the offspring of the baby boom generation) began to reach school age. Elementary school membership began to climb in 1985 while intermediate (or middle) and high school membership remained fairly steady.

As the 1990s began, population growth in York County was continuing to slow from its peak in 1986 based on the number of certificates of occupancy issued by the County for new residences. During the second half of 1991, however, the County began to experience a housing boom. Between July 1, 1991, and June 30, 1992, a total of 786 new housing units were built in the County—85% more than were built in the previous twelve-month period. Most of this development activity took place in the southern part of the County, where 87% of these new homes were built, with the Coventry and Kiln Creek planned developments leading the way. Manpower increases at Langley Air Force Base caused by the consolidation of the Strategic and Tactical Air Commands into the Air Combat Command, coupled with the lowest interest rates in more than a decade, are presumed to be largely responsible for the increase in new home demand. This population growth brought a sudden sharp increase in school membership in 1991 and an even sharper increase in 1992. School membership jumped dramatically from 9,368 to 10,351, an increase of 11% in just those two years. Between 1992 and 1998 both population and school membership has continued to grow, although at slower pace than the first two years of the decade. During the 1990s total population has increased by 30% and school membership by 22%. Almost all the

growth in school membership from 1980 to 1997 took place in the lower County as did the population growth.

Measuring School Capacity

In order to measure school crowding, a comparison must be made between school membership and the housing capacities of the schools. School capacities can be determined by using the original architectural design capacity or by using the program capacity. The architectural design capacity is based on state standards as to how many students can be accommodated within a particular physical space. On the other hand, program capacity is determined not only by available physical space, but also by the constraints placed on physical space by programs. State education mandates, school board policies, changes in educational philosophy, and desires and expectations of the community can all effect changes in program capacities over time.

In the early 1990s the School Board contracted with Dr. Glen Earthman, a recognized expert on school capacity calculation, to develop a study of the *program* capacity of each of the York County schools. The extent of overcrowding had previously been calculated based on design capacity of each building; and while design capacity figures in the early '90s indicated ample space for the student enrollment, the experience of the school division was that, in reality, overcrowding existed. After visiting all of the York County Schools, Dr. Earthman developed capacity estimates in the fall of 1992 for each school based not only on the size of each instructional space but also on the program for which it was being used. Several sets of figures were prepared under differing parameters with regard to such variables as the student/classroom ratio and the range of classes offered at each school level. After deliberation, the School Board adopted program capacity calculations that provided for full day kindergarten and for student/classroom ratios of 22:1 in the elementary schools, 23:1 in the middle schools, and 25:1 in the high schools. This resulted in a total school *program* capacity of 8,941, almost 25% below the *design* capacity (11,530) of the then existing buildings. The combination of significant unexpected growth in school membership and the change from design to program capacity of school buildings ultimately led to a substantial school construction program. The results of the construction program can be seen in **Table 14**. As of the fall of 1997, additional capacity at the middle school level is needed to eliminate minor overcrowding; but overall system capacity of 12,703 exceeds the membership of 11,171 by 13%.

In order to measure potential future overcrowding, it is necessary to compare program capacity figures with present and projected future school membership levels and to take into consideration programs which are not being offered, such as full-day kindergarten and program changes which might occur in the future. Of course, projecting future population growth is not an exact science; and projecting future school membership is especially difficult, for there are a variety of demographic variables that play a role, many of which are intangible and thus highly unpredictable. In addition, future program changes are very difficult to envision. Often there is little upon which to base future projections other than past trends, and the validity of this approach is limited since we know that patterns change. School membership projection is particularly problematic in localities like York County, which have sizable military populations. Military transfers are unforeseeable events that can produce great fluctuations in school membership. Consequently, accurate forecasts – particularly long-range forecasts – depend as much on good luck as on perceptive judgment.

School Membership Projection Methodology

The foundation of all projections is the methodology by which they were developed and the assumptions upon which they are based. The methodology for deriving these school membership projections is essentially a two-step process. Step 1 involves the development of a base enrollment figure projected for each grade level using the standard *Grade Progression Method* of enrollment projection. Under this method, the number of students in each grade is assumed to equal the number of students in the previous grade during the previous year. The number of kindergartners has to be estimated since there is no previous grade from which to advance. The obvious weakness of this method is that it does not account for net migration, for students who fail or drop out of school, or for the many first-graders who do not attend public kindergarten. The Grade Progression Method merely establishes the base membership projection.

The second step of this process involves the adjustment of the base figures for each grade level by a change factor. This change factor reflects projected population growth in the County, as well as various assumptions discussed in detail below. In addition, the change factor reflects historical patterns of increase or decline at each grade level that have occurred in York County within the past ten years. Certain patterns in the grade structure occur regularly, such as large increases in the seventh and ninth grades and steady, sometimes sizable declines in grades ten, eleven, and twelve. These historical patterns give a good indication of how the projected growth in school membership will be distributed among grade levels. Special education student membership must be projected separately since these students are not included within the individual grade levels on the School Board's monthly membership report.

A number of assumptions about the future of York County were factored into the school membership projection equation. These relate to expected future trends in military spending by the Federal government, economic growth in the region and the County, and the direction that household sizes will follow.

The size of the military population in the County is one of the most important factors to consider in projecting school membership; unfortunately, it is also one of the most difficult variables to predict. Between 1980 and 1990 the total number of military personnel in the labor force in York County (excluding trainees at the U. S. Coast Guard Reserve Training Center) increased from 2,500 in to 2,751, and this resulted in a corresponding increase in the number of Federal-impact aid students in the school system, which rose from 4,509 in 1981 to 5,067 in 1991. There are reasons to doubt that such growth will continue. The Federal budget deficit and recent changes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe that have lessened cold war tensions indicate the likelihood of overall military cutbacks in the 1990s, but this does not *necessarily* translate into cutbacks in York County or Hampton Roads. Some areas of the nation will no doubt lose military personnel as a result of the military restructuring, but other areas may gain, just as the Air Force consolidation in the early 1990s increased manpower levels at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton Roads at the expense of Omaha, Nebraska, site of Offutt Air Force Base. Given the overall climate surrounding military spending, it would not be realistic to assume continued growth, nor would it be prudent to assume dramatic decline. Therefore, it is assumed that there will be short-term military growth in the County but that such growth will end during the latter half of the 1990s.

Military growth contributes to population growth both directly and indirectly. Of course, increases in manpower levels at area bases bring new families; this is the direct impact. In addition, military growth contributes to general economic growth in the region, and job growth is a key determinant of population growth. York County, like the rest of Hampton Roads, benefited tremendously from the military build-up that took place during the 1980s. However, for the reasons stated above, the 1990s will most likely bring leaner defense budgets, which will have a dampening effect on economic growth, as demonstrated by the series of layoffs made at Newport News Shipbuilding in the early '90s. To a great extent, the strength of the regional economy in the future will likely depend on the region's ability to diversify its economic base.

Factors that may help to offset defense-related cutbacks include the low cost of doing business in Hampton Roads, the Navy's dominant role in the area and its relatively small percentage reduction compared to the other services, and the upgrading of current naval systems, which implies that more ship repairs and enhancements will be implemented in local shipyards. It should also be noted that York County has certain locational advantages over some other localities in the region such as a greater supply of vacant land and excellent access to transportation networks, which may allow it to attract a growing share of regional economic development.

Overall, it is assumed that, in the long run, regional economic growth will be sufficient to sustain population growth. Although declines in job growth are expected during the '90s, employment is expected to accelerate somewhat around the turn of the century as the regional economy diversifies and as York County's economic development efforts bear fruit.

With regard to demographics, it is assumed that fertility rates in York County will continue to mirror statewide fertility rates, which are expected to decrease in the long run. Nevertheless, some short-term increases in the *birth* rate are anticipated since a large share of the baby boom generation remained in the childbearing ages through 1995.

To a certain extent, York County, because of its substantial military population, is shielded from national demographic trends, for the County's demographics are skewed somewhat by the presence of military families. Although household sizes in Census Tract 506, which consists solely of the Naval Weapons Station, Camp Peary, and Cheatham Annex, followed the national trend of decline during the 1980s, the average household size in Bethel Manor (Langley Air Force Base housing) rose slightly. In fact, the ratio of Federal-impact aid students to military personnel in the County increased slightly during the 1980s – from 1.80 to 1.82 – indicating that the decline in household sizes in the County has been mitigated to a certain extent by growth in military family size. The average household size in the County *did* decline between 1980 and 1990 (from 3.15 to 2.90 persons per household) but would have declined more if not for military growth. This factor is assumed to continue only in the short term.

Household sizes are assumed to decline through the year 2000 and beyond. For purpose of comparison, the average household size in the County fell at an average rate of 0.8% per year during the 1980s. It should be noted that even during the peak years of the baby boom – from 1950 through 1960 – household sizes in the United States declined, albeit slightly, from 3.37 to 3.33 persons per household. Household sizes are assumed to start to fall for two reasons. The baby boom generation began to pass out of the childbearing ages in 1991 and will ultimately be replaced by the smaller baby bust generation. The natural decline in the number of potential mothers dampens the birth rate and therefore reduces average household sizes. Of course, there will be women between ages 15 and 44 moving into York County, but there will not likely be enough to increase the size of this age group at rates comparable to the 1970s or '80s. It should be remembered that these trends are taking place nationwide as well, and this is reflected in the sharp decline in the migration rate of childbearing-age women into York County in the 1980s in comparison to the 1970s.

In addition, little or no growth in the military population is assumed to occur after the turn of the century, thereby removing the upward pressure on household sizes and subjecting the County to national demographic trends.

School Membership Projections

Projected school membership and school capacity is shown in Table 11. York County is expected to experience continued growth in school membership throughout the 1990s. Increases in elementary school membership will be fueled by the baby boom echo, which began impacting secondary school membership in 1993. Of course, the impact of these increases in school membership will be felt mostly in the schools in the lower County where most of the population growth is projected to take place. Based on development plans submitted to the County and the availability of vacant, developable land, this area of the County is expected to attract most of the population growth through 2015, although some growth is also anticipated in the upper County.

The turn of the century is expected to bring slower population growth in York County. By the year 2000, most of the baby boom will have advanced beyond the childbearing ages, only to be replaced by the baby bust. Just as the baby boom had its echo, the baby bust will have an echo of its own, and the birth rate will fall as the number of people in the childbearing ages falls. Residential development activity is expected to continue – bringing new families into the County – but is not expected to match the housing growth of the 1990s. This reflects such factors as the decreasing supply of residential land, new residential land-use designations which will allow less housing density, new environmental constraints on development, and the County's priority for extending public utilities to developed rather than undeveloped residential areas.

Slower population growth will translate into slower growth in school membership. As the baby boom echo grows up and exits the school system, it will be replaced by the baby bust echo, which will bring relative stability to school membership as the baby bust during the 1970s brought relative stability after the high-growth '60s. Elementary school membership is expected to begin to decline sometime during the 2000-2005 period, while secondary school membership most likely will start to fall during the latter part of the decade. At around the year 2005, however, the baby boom echo will begin to reach the childbearing ages, bringing an increase in births that will cause elementary school membership to rise

once again around the year 2009. Of course, the full impact of this increase in the birth rate will be felt beyond 2010 when elementary school enrollment should begin to rise again.

Projected Membership and Capacity Comparisons

Since school membership can be so volatile and thus difficult to forecast beyond the short term, and future program changes are unknown, it would be neither realistic nor prudent to make school construction recommendations or decisions on the basis of long-range membership projections. For example, the Forecast 2015 Committee projections adopted in January 1996 appear to overstate school membership based on actual 1997 and 1998 enrollment. Six years, which correspond with the County's Capital Improvement Program, is an appropriate horizon for school facility planning.

The school system capacities as well as actual and projected membership from Forecast 2015 are shown in **Table 14**. The upper County is to be considered that portion of the County to the north of Route 238, while that portion to the south of that roadway is considered the lower County. This hypothetical division of the County into two areas is only for the purpose of forecasting general trends and is not meant to suggest that there can be no mixing of students between the two geographic areas.

School enrollment is projected to peak at approximately 14,100 students in the 2009-10 school year. The increase in births through 1995 will be reflected in a steadily growing elementary school enrollment through the year 2005, and elementary enrollment will begin to rise again after 2010—five years after births are projected to rebound. Steady growth in the elementary schools will fuel increases in the middle school population, where enrollment is projected to continue to grow through 2005Xwith accelerated growth in the 2000-05 periodXand decline thereafter. Middle school enrollment is projected to peak at 3,460 in the 2004-05 school year. This represents an increase of one-third over 1995-96 enrollment. Similarly, high school enrollment will continue to grow through 2010, fueled by steady growth at the middle school level. High school enrollment is projected to reach almost 4,900 in 2010 before turning downward.

ACTUAL AND PROJECTED YORK COUNTY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND CAPACITY												
	1992 Program Capacity	1994 (Actual)		1998 Program Capacity	1999 (Projected)		2004 (Projected)		2009 (Projected)		2014 (Projected)	
		Students	Surplus or Deficit		Students	Surplus or Deficit	Students	Surplus or Deficit	Students	Surplus or Deficit	Students	Surplus or Deficit
UPPER COUNTY												
Elementary	694	812	-118	924	940	-16	1,010	-86	1,020	-96	1,070	-146
Middle	455	427	28	455	440	15	550	-95	570	-115	570	-115
High	878	550	328	878	630	248	620	258	760	118	760	118
TOTAL	2027	1789	238	2257	2010	247	2,180	77	2,350	-93	2,400	-143
LOWER COUNTY												
Elementary	3,573	4,122	-549	4,807	5,030	-223	4,980	-173	4,860	-53	4,790	17
Middle	1,215	2,085	-870	2,215	2,440	-225	2,910	-695	2,750	-535	2,760	-545
High	2,126	2,570	-444	3,654	3,230	424	3,490	164	4,100	-446	3,760	-106
TOTAL	6,914	8,777	-1863	10,676	10,700	-24	11,380	-704	11,710	-1034	11,310	-634
TOTAL COUNTY												
Elementary	4,267	4,934	-667	5,731	5,970	-239	5,990	-259	5,880	-149	5,860	-129
Middle	1,670	2,512	-842	2,670	2,880	-210	3,460	-790	3,320	-650	3,330	-660
High	3,004	3,120	-116	4,532	3,860	672	4,110	422	4,870	-338	4,520	12
TOTAL	8,941	10,566	-1625	12,933	12,710	223	13,560	-627	14,070	-1137	13,710	-777
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future changes in programs may lead to capacity changes. • Shaded areas indicate actual or projected deficits. • Projections from <u>Forecast 2015</u>, the report of the Comprehensive Plan Forecast 2015 Committee, adopted by the York County Board of Supervisors January 17, 1996. 												

Table 14

As in the past, lower County schools will continue to bear the brunt of this growth. Based on projected enrollment, there will be some overcrowding at the elementary and high school levels in the lower County and at the elementary and middle school levels in the upper County. The amount of overcrowding will not likely be sufficient to warrant construction of additional schools, but will require some additions to existing facilities, or possibly, where the problem is temporary, portable classrooms. With respect to

middle school overcrowding in the lower County, it appears that a significant addition to an existing middle school will be required shortly after the year 2000.

CHANGES SINCE 1991

Shortly after the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1991, a sudden and unexpected surge in school membership during 1991 and 1992 caused great concern. The situation was exacerbated by the School Board's decision to place sixth graders in the existing intermediate schools which were designed for two grade levels rather than three and by a re-evaluation of the student capacity of the various schools. This sudden school crowding led to several initiatives in the early '90s, including the formation of a long-range school planning committee to review school attendance zone boundaries. This committee was formed by the School Board at the suggestion of the ad hoc Superintendent's Committee on Resources Imbalance in Secondary Schools, which was created to study the problems of secondary school overcrowding and under utilization. The Resources Imbalance Committee recommended a series of actions and policies to alleviate these problems. In addition, the County initiated a substantial capital construction program. Between 1992 and 1997 Grafton High/Middle School was built, and additions were programmed at Tabb High School and Tabb Middle School. At the elementary level, additions and renovations were made at Yorktown, Grafton/Bethel, Magruder, Coventry, Bethel Manor, Tabb, and Dare. The construction program has provided sufficient capacity to meet student enrollment up to this point in time. Between 1992 and 1998, growth in student enrollment has slowed significantly. The changes made to the Comprehensive Plan in 1992 to revise student enrollment projections have been adjusted in this plan in light of the moderation in enrollment growth since 1992.